

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) An apparatus comprising a at least one nozzle, the nozzle including a first injector for injecting a highly-carbon-laden gas, the nozzle including at least one second injector for injecting a mixture of a fuel and an oxidant for a pilot flame, the nozzle secured in a moveable head assembly, the head assembly comprising a main gas block and an ignition source mounted in a gas plenum which encloses respective tips of the first and second injectors, the highly-carbon-laden gas and the fuel and oxidant mixture adapted to exit through these tips and enter and fill the gas plenum, and one or more deflector jets installed at points substantially between first and second injectors, the deflector jet adapted to direct a portion of said mixture of fuel gas and oxidant toward the ignition source.

Claim 2 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein the nozzle is adapted to be quickly removed and replaced by an identical nozzle.

Claim 3 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein the nozzle is adapted to be quickly removed and replaced by a non-identical nozzle.

Claim 4 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein the head assembly is removeably secured to a funnel arm shaft block.

Claim 5 (currently amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 4 wherein the head assembly is equipped with at least two gas supply connections, one for highly-carbon-laden gas, and one for mixture of fuel and oxidant for a the pilot flame.

Claim 6 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 5 wherein the head assembly is equipped with a third gas supply connection for purge gas.

Claim 7 (currently amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 5 or claim 6 wherein the gas supply connections are connected to gas supply conduits which are connected in turn to a gas distribution block or gas panel, which is plumbed preferably in close proximity to the head assembly.

Claim 8 (currently amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 7 wherein the gas distribution block is equipped with ~~quick disconnects, preferably color-coded [,]~~ connectors which can be joined or disconnected with a simple movement, which connect to the gas supply conduits.

Claim 9 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein the head assembly is connected to a head assembly mounting plate.

Claim 10 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 9 wherein the head assembly mounting plate is connected to a clamp block.

Claim 11 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 9 wherein the head assembly mounting plate comprises a T-tongued plate.

Claim 12 (currently amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 10 wherein the clamp block comprises two halves which are secured together using matching clamp lock block clamp halves using a clamp block bolt and a clamp block nut which engages the clamp block bolt in order to tighten the clamp block onto a shaft, the shaft positioned in a shaft clamp block hole.

Claim 13 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein the main gas block comprises conduits for injection of purge gas to purge said first injector, said second injector, or both said first and said second injectors.

Claim 14 (currently amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein the ignition source is further comprised of comprising an automatic ignition system, the automatic ignition system comprising a spark producing means inserted in said gas plenum, an electronic connections controller for allowing electronic controls of an IS machine to control the spark producing means, and logic software capable of interacting with the electronic controls of an the IS machine.

Claim 15 (original) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein said gas plenum is formed by a shield and shelf combination.

Claim 16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (currently amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein said nozzle is further comprised of:

- a) a substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical body having a gas exit end and a connection end, the gas exit end having an end cap having a central orifice and at least one non-central orifice, the central orifice having positioned therein said first injector, wherein said first injector is further comprised of a hollow tube having it its first end extending into the central orifice and a second end extending into the substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical body, the second end of the hollow tube being supported by and extending through a support plate positioned in an interior location of the substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical body, the connection end of the substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical

body adapted to be mated with a sealing member when the nozzle is installed for use;

- b) ~~The~~ the support plate positioned to divide the interior of the substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical body into a first chamber and a second chamber, the first chamber defined by the support plate, end cap, and a first interior surface of the substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical body, the second chamber defined by the support plate, sealing member, and a second interior surface of the substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical body;
- c) ~~The~~ the substantially hollow, substantially cylindrical body having at least one orifice extending from an exterior surface of the body to the first chamber, and at least one orifice extending from the exterior surface of the body to the second chamber.

Claim 18 (currently amended) Nozzle Apparatus in accordance with claim 17 wherein the sealing member is a threaded bolt having male threads adapted to mate with female threads on the second interior surface of the body.

Claim 19 (currently amended) Nozzle Apparatus in accordance with claim 17 having at least three non-central orifices.

Claim 20 (currently amended) Nozzle Apparatus in accordance with claim 17 wherein the first end of the hollow tube extends through the central orifice and wherein the first end of said hollow tube is extended away from the end cap a distance ranging from 0 centimeter to about 5 centimeters.

Claim 21 (currently amended) Nozzle Apparatus in accordance with claim 17 which has at least two orifices extending from the exterior surface of the body to the second chamber.

Claim 22 (currently amended) ~~Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 wherein the head assembly is further comprised of a main gas block, the main gas block is further comprised of having a support portion and header, the support portion having at least two gas supply connections, a first gas supply connection adapted for accepting flow of a the highly-carbon-laden gas, and a second gas supply connection adapted for accepting flow of a the mixture of fuel and oxidant, the gas supply connections adapted to be connected to gas supply conduits, the first and second gas supply connections connected to respective conduits internal to said support section portion and said header for supplying said gases to at the least one nozzle for depositing carbon black, said at least one nozzle positioned in a hole in said header.~~

Claim 23 (currently amended) ~~Head assembly Apparatus~~ in accordance with claim 22 wherein the support section portion has a third gas supply connection, the third gas supply connection adapted to receive a flow of a purge gas, the third gas supply connection connected to respective conduits internal to said support portion and said header to supply purge gas to said at least one nozzle.

Claim 24 (currently amended) ~~Head assembly Apparatus~~ in accordance with claim 22 comprising a shield substantially surrounding a gas exit end of the nozzle.

Claim 25 (currently amended) ~~Head assembly Apparatus~~ in accordance with claim 24 comprising a spark igniter wherein said ignition source is positioned in a side of the shield.

Claim 26 (currently amended) ~~Head assembly Apparatus~~ in accordance with claim 25 comprising a purge gas nozzle positioned on an under side of the header and protruding into a space created by the shield, the purge gas nozzle positioned to direct a flow of purge gas near the spark igniter said ignition source.

Claim 27 (currently amended) ~~Head assembly~~ Apparatus in accordance with claim 22 comprising a removable head assembly mounting plate comprising a T-tongued plate on a clamp block, wherein the T-tongued plate serves to position the head assembly on a clamp block.

Claim 28 (currently amended) ~~Head assembly~~ Apparatus accordance with claim 27 wherein the head assembly mounting plate has off-setting bolt holes from a center line of the mounting plate.

Claim 29 (currently amended) ~~Head assembly~~ Apparatus in accordance with claim 27 wherein the clamp block allows height adjustment on a shaft, the clamp block comprising a T-slot adapted to accept ~~a T-tongue of a mounting plate the head assembly mounting plate~~, and a rectangular slot adapted to receive an engaging nut, the clamp block comprising two ~~haves~~ halves secured together using matching clamp block clamp halves using a clamp block bolt and engagement nut, the clamp block having a clamp block shaft hole adapted to accommodate a shaft.

Claim 30 (currently amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 14 wherein the automatic ignition system comprises ~~an~~ the electronic controller and a spark igniter producing means, the electronic controller adapted to initiate flow of fuel and oxidant gases, and said electronic controller adapted to cause an electrical signal to the spark igniter producing means and ignite a the pilot flame in said spark producing means at least one cycle before a firing cycle, and deactivate the flow of fuel and oxidant gases following a scheduled need for said pilot flame.

Claim 31 (withdrawn)

Claim 32 (new) Apparatus in accordance with claim 2 wherein the nozzle is adapted to be removed and replaced by an identical nozzle in less than 60 seconds.

Claim 33 (new) Apparatus in accordance with claim 3 wherein the nozzle is adapted to be removed and replaced by a non-identical nozzle in less than 60 seconds.

Claim 34 (new) An apparatus comprising:

- a) at least one nozzle,
- b) the nozzle including a first injector for injecting a highly-carbon-laden gas,
- c) the nozzle including at least one second injector for injecting a mixture of a fuel and an oxidant for a pilot flame,
- d) the nozzle secured in a moveable head assembly, the head assembly comprising a main gas block and an ignition source mounted in a gas plenum which encloses respective tips of the first and second injectors,
- e) the highly-carbon-laden gas and the fuel and oxidant mixture adapted to exit through these tips and enter and fill the gas plenum,
- f) one or more deflector jets installed at points substantially between first and second injectors, the deflector jet adapted to direct a portion of said mixture of fuel gas and oxidant toward the ignition source, and
- g) wherein the ignition source comprises an electronic controller and a spark producing means, the electronic controller adapted to initiate flow of fuel and oxidant gases, and said electronic controller adapted to cause an electrical signal to the spark producing means and ignite the pilot flame in said spark producing means at least

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one cycle before a firing cycle, and deactivate the flow of fuel and oxidant following a scheduled need for said pilot flame.